



Action from -18th November 2021 - Drainage ideas for Countryside Park.¶

Why produce.

At the previous meeting on the 18th November 2021 I took an action to bring ideas to the next meeting on enhancing the Countryside Park, so that in the winter months the park is still usable for all users of the park. This follows a previous meeting back in early 2019 prior to Covid and to bring these ideas back to the table.¶

Detail of problem

The winter months at the Countryside Park are always difficult, with the majority of walkways turning slippery and muddy which brings an element of risk to all the users of the park. It is positive to see that the park is very well used by multiple users across the week and you can clearly see this affects all parts of the park, on pathways and cut throughs and much of this is due to location, the soil type, drainage and camber of the local area. The park drops down very low in places and is close to the river.¶

For Brundall parkrun at this time of year we have to make a weekly decision about the safety to run the free event every Saturday morning. This involves regular weather watching and several site visits across the week leading up to Saturday mornings. We have all ages and all abilities and the slippery conditions are a major consideration for a cancellation. We have cancelled 3 runs recently all due to major slip hazards following weeks of rain on the course.¶

As regular users of the park we have become familiar with how it reacts to the weather, the west side of the park is usually the hardest hit due to the incline from Postwick road down to the train line, this is usually the first point to suffer from muddy conditions. It also does not get a lot of sunlight in winter so does not dry out and when it rains you can clearly see the movement of water down the incline. ¶

At the bottom parallel with the train line is also a hard hit area, the sun (when seen) does not hit this area much in the winter period and with the trees on the train line blocking much of the sunlight, this area and the bottom of the west side are usually major concerns for us. Overall drainage on the east side is better, and the park will recover from major rain after around 48 hours, but during this time there is risk to all users.

It is also worth remembering that the Countryside Park is one of the only off road places in Brundall and is one of the main reasons people like to use it, as its safe, secure and beautiful setting.¶

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Brundall parkrun as a user of the park on a Saturday morning has pulled this document together for discussion, but as already mentioned we are not the only users.

We are also not experts in drainage, many of the ideas have previously been discussed and these ideas might require funding.¶¶

1. To reduce the mud in winter. Turn walkways into actual pathways. Laying a full or partial pathway with an agreed material. Especially in certain areas that don't get much sunlight in the winter months. There would be many considerations ¶¶
 - a. Is this something the Countryside Park wants or are the current walkways the look and feel wanted? I have included a document from ramblers.org.uk, that gives various case studies. You can download here <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/walking-neighbourhoods/new-parks-and-green-spaces-report.aspx> ¶¶
 - b. Does a pathway fit with the long term strategic approach to the park?. ¶¶
 - c. Adding additional materials to the walkways. Previously discussions have focused on Cinder. Cinder was previously used on certain parts of the park in early 2015 and in 2019 was roundly rejected as being used again. My belief is that the rejection was the material, but could additional natural components be added to muddy parts of the park like Straw or wood chips. ¶¶
 - d. Adding fully laid paths. Lingwood have added pathways to their countryside park using an aggregate type substance, this would need to be compacted and would take away the grass element from the park walkways.¶¶



2. Additional drainage on the west side of the park. (French drain type). ¶
 - a. Cutting a causeway (2 foot by 2 foot max) into the West side to a small soakaway, filling with rock type substance and then over filling with soil. Potentially doing this three/four times, one at top, one at bottom and two in the central parts.¶This we believe could remove water from the worst affected parts of the countryside park.
 - b. Would require volunteers to dig and cost to purchase gravel, but could be completed in readiness for winter 2022. Or before the pathways dry out.¶
3. Widening the pathways on the west side of the park and along the train line. Removal of plant material would allow for mowing when this starts in 2022 and allow all users to get up the west side in a more safe manner. This would not make the drainage any better, but might give options over the winter period to prolong the usage of the park for all users of the park.¶
 - a. In 2019 the West side was cut back and allowed us to rest parts of the muddy course; we did this for one parkrun prior to COVID, but certainly an option to prolong the park usage. Could potentially add 10-15 feet of extra width to the pathway. ¶
 - b. Clearing the west side would give more options for reconfiguration of the course if weather was bad and allow other users to avoid muddy areas.¶
 - c. Clearing the bottom along the train line could let in more sunlight and potentially add 3-5 foot of extra width to the pathway.¶
 - d. This is a quick and potentially fast option with work being able to be started immediately with consent.
4. At the end of the summer make the final cut of the grass earlier (August)(not sure when it was cut in 2021), so that it grows longer for winter, again not a long term solution but may allow the root and grass to be better established come the winter months.¶
 - a. Ensuring the cutter is aware of the situation.¶
 - b. Could give a more dense grass in winter of 2022 which could potentially hold together for longer.¶
5. Adding lime or sand to the soil to make the soil drain better. A rather manual process, but could potentially be done over a number of months. Would need to consider the impacts of doing this, but both have been suggested to make better drainage of the areas. ¶

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6. Adding a drainage mat to certain parts of the park.¶
 - a. Something like the below, this would hold the pathways together, but would need consideration around maintenance.¶
 - b. This could also be considered with point 1 and potentially be used with a gravel or with grass over the top, this would make the mud situation less of an impact in the winter period.¶
 - c. This is seen across parks and car parks.¶



- d. Product example

https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B09HCJJM5Q/ref=sspa_dk_detail_2?pd_rd_i=B09HCJQ9NJ&pd_rd_w=59DE9&pf_rd_p=828203ef-618e-4303-a028-460d6b615038&pd_rd_wg=bPJ6I&pf_rd_r=99CAN782Z98FZGZVCXK7&pd_rd_r=efcbda80-9203-4646-913b-3ee6b9c9f71b&spLa=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUEzMUU2S0kyUkU3TjgwJmVuY3J5cHRlZElkPUEwNTk0NDU1M0daQUE2WDdQTENHVSIbmNyeXB0ZWRBZEIkPUEwNTYwNDMwRTNJS1cxRII5MFUzJndpZGdldE5hbWU9c3BfZGV0YWIsJmFjdGlrbj1jbGlja1JlZGlhZWN0JmRvTm90TG9nQ2xpY2s9dHJ1ZQ&th=1¶



The above options are the main considerations we can think of to aid the situation. We have discussed this with Rob A and Richard F outside of the meetings and brought these options into the document.

This is not a new problem and potentially not something we can solve for early 2022, but we want to explore options going forward to late 2022 and onward. The pathways are prone to damage from all users and weather and we want to ensure as many people can use the park on a regular basis, even in winter. This is not only a parkrun issue. ¶

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